

Her Mother's Daughter

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Summary: What if Phil Coulson and Melinda May had a child? Why do bad things happen to good people? How can you know someone if you don't even remember meeting them? Some things you can't fight, sometimes a way of life chooses you. It's just in your blood. "If he was going to make some sort of corny dad joke he would say something like 'I didn't choose the spy life, the spy life chose me.'"

Her Mother's Daughter

The cries of his newborn daughter fill the room and he doesn't think he has ever heard a more beautiful sound. Melinda looks up at him, their newly welcomed daughter cradled in her arms. Her hair is mussed and her body belays a sense of tiredness, but he has never seen such a look of joy, of pure happiness in her eyes before and it makes his smile even wider if that is actually even possible. He snaps a picture to remember the moment, it's too perfect for him to risk ever forgetting.

"Which name?" he asks as he settles down beside Melinda on the bed, one arm around her shoulders holding her and the baby into his side. She's silent for a moment, focusing on the little one in her arms, the little pink face all scrunched up with the most adorable tuft of dark hair atop her head.

"Amelia," she says softly, brushing a finger along her daughter's cheek.

"Amelia May Coulson," he tests the name out liking the way it sounds. A perfect name for his perfect little girl.

Melinda shifts their daughter into his arms and he holds her for the first time. He coos softly to her, in awe of this tiny, amazing little being that he has wrapped up in his arms. He and Melinda made this perfect little being. This little person is half of him. He whispers sweet promises to his daughter, promises of protection and of love. There is nothing in this world that would ever be able to

come between him and his little girl. He can already tell that there would be nothing that he wouldn't do for her.

"Look, mummy's sleeping," he whispers to his daughter as he watches his wife fall into a deep slumber, exhausted from labour. His daughter makes the cutest gesture, mouth opening slightly as her tongue pokes out. She gurgles slightly as she too falls asleep. Smiling down at her he places a gentle kiss upon her forehead before placing another kiss upon her mother's.

* * *

><p>Phil smiled down at his little girl as she played quietly down on the floor close to his desk. She grinned up at him with a giggle, her few teeth showing making her look absolutely adorable. Holding her arms up at him he was unable to resist his little girl's request. Picking her up and placing her in his lap as he sat in his office chair, she leant against him wrapping her little arms around his neck.<p>

"It's alright sweetie," he assured her as she gave him her 'sad eyes', a sudden change in her mood. "Mummy will be home soon."

For a two year old their daughter was incredibly intelligent. She knew when her mother was away and seemed to pick up on the worry for her safety.

"Mama?" She asked as more of a question.

"Don't you worry Angel eyes," her father said stroking her hair soothingly. "Mama will be fine."

The phone rings interrupting their moment and he reaches around his daughter to answer it.

"Director?" Simmons asks on the other end. Her voice is grave and she sounds like she is on the verge of tears. Dread fills him as he begins to think the worse and his little girl seems to pick up on his mood, sitting up a bit against him.

"I'm so sorry sir," Simmons says voice breaking. "I- I couldn't- I couldn't save her." He almost drops the phone but he doesn't know for sure who Simmons is talking about. Ok he's 99% sure but he refuses to believe it until he hears it, even then he still won't believe it until he sees it.

"Just say it Jemma," he replies preparing himself for the fall.

"It's May sir."

And that's all he needed to hear to have the air rush out of his lungs. He can't breath, he can't think. The only thing in his head is May. Melinda. The phone falls from his hand and bangs against the side of his desk, swinging aimlessly from side to side, dangling by its cord.

"Dada?" His little girl asks looking up at him with a worried expression. Crap, she's two and she's worried about him. He needs to pull his shit together.

"Dada?" She asks again at his lack of response.

"Shh, hey baby girl," he tries to placate her, kissing her temple as he rises from the chair and carries her down the hall. "Fitz, can you watch her for a bit?" He asks the engineer who looks up from his computer.

"Yeah sure sir, come here you," he answers Coulson and greets his daughter scooping her up from Coulson's arms and taking her over to his work bench. Phil is already striding off for the hangar, preparing to meet the others when the plane lands. He's not sure if he's ready for this, he's not sure if he can believe what is happening.

It feels as though everyone has picked up on the atmosphere of the day as the hangar is surprisingly empty when the team returns. Jemma and Daisy have tears dried on their faces as they walk down the ramp. They try to stop him as he races up the ramp, but their attempts at stopping him are only half hearted. He needs this, he needs to see her, and they seem to sense that.

Her body is laid out along the length of the stretcher and he thinks that if it weren't for the blood staining her, she could just be sleeping. His hold on her hand is like a lifeline, it's still warm but it's rapidly cooling. He's sorry that he didn't get to her in time, he wasn't with her when she went. She didn't get to see her daughter one last time. She didn't get to say goodbye. Their daughter doesn't even have all her teeth yet! How can she lose her mother? It wasn't supposed to go like this. Melinda was supposed to be by his side forever. She was supposed to raise their daughter to be an amazing young woman who knew how to kick ass just as well as her. Their daughter wouldn't even remember her. He cried. Their daughter would never truly know her mother, she would never know, or remember the amazing woman who had brought her into this world. He cried for his loss and he cried for his daughter's loss. The loss of a mother, the loss of his life partner, the loss of his second, his right hand.

"I've failed you," he whispered through his tears. "I should never have let you back in the field after Amelia. I should have kept you safe."

He wishes he could have done that, but he knows it would never have worked. Melinda loved the field and he couldn't possibly deny her what she loved, not after how far she's come back from being broken. She would have been so unhappy if he had sheltered here, it wasn't what suited a woman like her. Safe wasn't Melinda. Melinda was action and mystery. She was suspense and danger. She was not safe, not in the typical terms anyway. She made others feel safe, those that she protected, but she was not safe with herself. She always put everyone else before herself, to her everyone else had a higher value than she did. It broke his heart and he had tried so hard to change the way she viewed herself, but if Melinda was anything it was stubborn. Stubborn, beautiful, dedicated, loyal, fierce, brave, intelligent, wonderful. He had never loved anyone as much as he loved Melinda May.

* * *

><p>Phil smiled at his three year old cuddled up in his side as he lay next to her in her bed trying to get her to sleep.<p>

"Story?" She asked watching him with those dark eyes that were so clearly Melinda that it sometimes made his heart ache. He swallowed down the grief and stroked his little girls hair.

"Just one," he replied earning himself a happy little smile. "What one shall it be?" He asked.

"Tell me about mummy," she requested snuggling into his side.

A small sad smile formed across his face as he looked down at his little girl and began the story.

"One day," he began, absentmindedly stroking her hair. "There was a beautiful young woman named Melinda, who worked for a secret place called SHIELD. Melinda was a special young woman because she was a specialist, and she was the best of the specialists."

"She was an agent though," his daughter added looking up at him seriously.

"Yes she was an agent," he smiled dropping a kiss on her forehead. He'd told the story many times before, Amelia probably could have told the story to him. It was one of her favourite stories, hearing about her mother. His little girl didn't get sad though, she was still too young to really understand. Eventually though she would begin to ask questions and he'd have to steel himself to deliver the hard truths. It had broken his heart to explain to his two year old that her mummy would never be coming home. Melinda and Amelia had been so close, having her mother ripped away from her would probably have left his daughter with some sort of emotional damage, but he'd cross that bridge when he came to it. For now she was still enjoying her youth and innocence. He just tried to make sure that she felt loved and treasured, and provide the stability that she needed. He wasn't going to leave her without both parents.

"And she swung the magical staff, hitting the evil cult follower, saving the day," His voice faded as he saw his daughter being lulled into sleep.

"She was a hero," his daughter mumbled snuggling down into her bed as gradually her eyes fluttered shut, shielding him from those dark eyes.

"Yes, she was a hero," he whispered kissing her hair and shifting slowly and quietly out of the bed. He rearranged the blankets on his daughter before leaving the room, shutting the door with a quiet click. Their daughter was an energetic little being, so curious and excited about the world. He loved her childhood innocence and hoped that she would keep it for as long as possible. He didn't want her to be tainted by the world ever, but he was realistic enough to know that it was inevitable, and would settle for holding it off for as long as possible. His little girl was growing up so fast, sometimes he felt overwhelmed. Amelia would ask for stories of her mother, wanting to hear about the mother she barely remembered. She was too young to remember Phil reasons with himself, but he can't help but feel pained by the fact that his daughter barely remembers her mother. She may not remember her mother, but she remembers his

stories of her, and that may be the closest he can get to her remembering Melinda. He misses their little family, he misses seeing Melinda and their daughter cuddled up in bed together, or his little girl curled up in her mother's arms as she carries the tired child. He looks at the photo frame hidden within his desk drawer. Melinda is cradling Amelia after she was first born. Her hair is mussed and he can tell that she is tired, but she had never looked happier.

* * *

><p>"Whoop! Incoming!" Mack called with a smile as the little girl skipped through the garage waving to him with a smile as she headed up to the director's office. She rapped her knuckles quickly on the door waiting for a reply before twisting the handle and skipping in.<p>

"Hey dad," she grinned hopping up to sit on one of the chairs opposite his desk as he worked away on some papers.

"Hey Mellie," he smiled looking up from his work.

"Look, Daisy braided my hair," she turned her head proudly showing him the twin braids that Daisy had done for her.

"That's lovely sweetie," he told her admiring the braids. Her dark hair looked Amber in the sunlight that was streaming into his office and it reminded him of Melinda's hair in the sunlight. Their daughter was practically Melinda's mini me, and he's sure that if her mother were still around, Amelia would have followed her like a shadow.

"Daisy said she'd teach me to braid one day," he daughter went on breaking his reverie. "She does better hair than you do dad."

Phil made an expression of mock hurt at her words.

"How could you say that?!" He replied playfully in an exaggerated voice. "I do the best hair."

His daughter giggled at him bringing a smile to his face. She was so sweet, he didn't want her to grow up.

"I'm hungry daddy," she stated raising up on her knees to place her hands on his desk looking him square in the eye.

"Hi hungry, I'm daddy" he replied earning himself an eye roll that was so Melinda. It was sometimes unbelievable how alike Amelia was to her mother, especially at such a young age and having no proper recollection of her.

"Come on daddy," she said getting up from her chair and heading toward the door. "I'll make grilled cheese sandwiches."

"Grilled cheese sandwiches?" He asked raising an eyebrow. "Aren't you a little young to be cooking yet pip squeak?"

"I'm six daddy," his little girl said with a slightly shocked tone that he would think otherwise. Of _course_ six wasn't too young to cook.

"Oh, my apologies," he father said with a twinkle in his eye. "Lead the way my child," he gestured with his hand as he rose from his seat and followed her from his office. Maybe his daughter would be a better cook than her mother.

* * *

><p>He watches as she executes a perfect spinning kick followed by a sweep, knocking her opponent to the mats. A small smile of prides makes its way onto his face as he watches his daughter fly across the room in a series of kicks that would have made her mother proud. She moves gracefully and swiftly, with a quiet strength in her movements. He has never been prouder as she bows and accepts her black belt and certificate. Her first black belt he thinks to himself, what a milestone. Other parents are around him snapping pictures of their own children as they go up to receive their certificates and belts. Amelia smiles up at him grinning at the black belt in her hand. She runs and hugs him as soon as they are released and shows him her certificate and new belt.<p>

"We'll get it embroidered," he tells her as he looks over her belt with pride in his eyes. How many black belts Melinda had he can't recall because their were too many.

They walk over to table to fill out Amelia's name and details and hand in the belt to get it embroidered. She can't wipe the smile from her face and he walks with his arm slung around her shoulders as they make their way to Lola.

"How about we head home and share the good news and you can take a shower, and then we go out and celebrate?" He suggests as they drive.

"Sounds great dad," she replies happily, ecstatic about her achievement.

* * *

><p>"Oh wow."<p>

"That's great."

"Man now I want one."

"Cool Lia."

The other agents back at the base all fawn over her achievement looking at her certificate, asking where her new belt is and enquiring about the grading.

She smiles at them all and answers their questions, too over the moon to care if she has to answer the same question multiple times.

"I heard May had like a stack of these," Daisy says perking Amelia's interest. Her mother had a heap of black belts?

Her dad had told her about her mother, bits and pieces, snippets of her life, but he never went into a great deal of depth. She supposes it's because she was quite young at the time but she's older now, twelve, that's almost a teenager.

She doesn't need her dad to tuck her into bed anymore, but tonight she asks him to. As he sits on the edge of the bed as she makes herself comfortable, she raises the courage to ask her dad about her mum.

"Dad," she starts, picking nervously at her blanket. He sits beside her with his back against the headboard and his legs laid out on her bed in front of him. He looks down at her from where he was absently stroking a hand over her long dark hair. "Daisy said today that mum had a stack of black belts. I was wondering if you could tell me about mum?" She held her breath waiting for her father's reaction.

"I knew you'd ask eventually," he says with a sigh. It sounds more like a sigh of resignation. "You're mother," he starts trying to keep his even, unsure of where to start, "what would you like to know?"

"What was she like, as a kid, as a teen, as an adult? How did you two meet?"

"Well," he smiled fondly, "I can do a little better than that. I can show you," he stood up leaving the room to retrieve something.

He returned a few minutes later with several photo albums.

She looked at him puzzled, what on earth was her weird dad doing now? She'd never seen those albums before.

"You'll see," he said as if reading her mind.

Getting himself comfortable on the bed next to her again, he opened up the first photo album in his lap, allowing her to see the pictures.

"Your grandfather gave me these," he states as he allows her to study the photos and flip the pages. "He thought you might like to see them when you were older."

They're pictures, photos of her mother. There is one of her as a baby, and another of her as a toddler. She looks like a cheeky little kid with the cutest smile and messy dark hair. She turns the page and sees another picture of her mother in a figure skating dress.

"She was seven," her father says pointing at the picture. "She actually won a few competitions with her skating."

She looks at the photo feeling a sense of pride and awe spreading through her chest.

This is her mother.

They flip to the next page and she sees her mother posing in her taekwondo suit with a black belt.

"That was when she got her first black belt," he father says with a small sad smile. "You look just like her," he whispers pressing a kiss to the side of her head. She turns to look at him as he pulls up a picture of her with her new black belt on his phone. "See the

similarities?" He asks, putting the two photos side by side.

She looks closer at the two photos, it's almost like looking in the mirror. She never realised how much she looked like her mother. People never really said that she looked like her mother, probably because it was a sore topic for many, talking about her mum.

"You look just like her," he dad says again running a finger around the edge of the photo. She cuddles a little more into him, giving him a reassuring hug, she knows how talking about mum can make him sad sometimes. They turn the page together and there is a picture of her parents together. They're wearing standard issue SHIELD uniforms and her dad has his arm slung over her mother's shoulders as they both smile at the camera. Her dad looks so much younger in the photo, he must've been around twenty.

"She was eighteen," he says with a fond look on his face, "I was twenty."

"You look happy," she smiles running the tip of her finger over their faces.

"We were," her dad responds thinking back to that time. "Your mother was such trouble."

She looks at him with a questioning expression.

"Your mother was the prank queen at SHIELD academy," he elaborates, "she was quite the legend."

A grin appears on her face as she thinks about her mother as the infamous prank queen of SHIELD academy.

"Tell me about one of her pranks," she asks.

"Ok," her father says before turning back to her with mock serious expression. "But you have to promise me that you won't try and do what she did."

"Cross my heart," she grins making the motion over her heart, happy to play along with her father.

He relaxes again before starting to tell her about how her mother managed to convince one of the other cadets that they were shrinking, by slowly increasing the size of their furniture and their clothes. It had been a long project, one that had required plenty of time and planning. It had also by far been one of _the _best practical jokes in the history of shield. Garrett never managed to live that one down, well, until he turned out to be hydra of course, that was a bummer.

His daughter laughs at the genius of her mother's work. Her laugh reminds him so much of Melinda, the sound is music to his ears, just like the cries she made as his newborn daughter had once been. She smiles at him, a smile that warms his heart and makes him smile in return. It's been so long since he's truly talked about Melinda, and it feels good to share the memories of her with their daughter. He hopes that she will take away from these stories, a sense of getting to know who her mother was, and learning more of where she came from. There is so much of his daughter that is pure Melinda, he can't wait

to see what sort of a woman she becomes. He's sure she will be someone amazing like her mother, after all, it's in her blood.

That night as her father tucks her in, brushing back her hair and placing a kiss on her forehead, Amelia makes a wish.

She wants to be just like her mother when she grows up.

* * *

><p>She walks up to the director's office with purpose and knocks briefly before entering. Her father hadn't even replied yet but she knows he doesn't have anything urgent on, just paperwork and stuff. He looks over at her with a raised eyebrow as she strolls into the room. She doesn't say anything as she crosses the room and sits down on the edge of his desk, facing the big screen he had pulled up on the wall in front of it. Going back to what he was doing before he waits for her to speak. Like her mother, Amelia has never been one to waste words, when she's ready to talk she'll talk. Until then he'll wait, there's no good in trying to push her, he learnt that the hard way, she's just like her mother.<p>

She's grown into a fine young woman though he thinks as he waits for her to say what's on her mind. He doesn't think he did too badly raising her all on his own.

"I want to go into the field," she says suddenly in a carefully expressionless voice.

Always so direct he thinks, another trait of Melinda's.

He really shouldn't be so surprised by her request, she was practically born into becoming an agent. If he was going to make some sort of corny dad joke to lighten the mood, he would say something like 'I didn't choose the spy life, the spy life chose me.' But now isn't the time for jokes, it's a time of serious contemplation that holds his daughter's future in the balance. He could always say no and keep her safe from the field, away from the dangers of being killed. Away from meeting the same fate as her mother. That's what a selfish man would do. Phillip Coulson is not a selfish man though. How could he possibly deny his little girl what she wants to do most in life?

"Are you sure?" He asks seriously, he will not make this decision lightly.

"Yes," she nods affirmatively, a face of determination. "Daisy trained me, I'm one of our strongest combatants on base, and I know I'd be a good asset on the team. I've trained to be a specialist and I know I can get the job done. I'm ready dad."

He thinks it's ironic really. Melinda trained Daisy, and now Daisy's trained Amelia, Melinda's daughter. In some ways his daughter is still learning from her mother, even when she's no longer here. It makes him feel proud and sad all at once. He's proud of their daughter, she's a remarkable young woman. He's also proud of the legacy that Melinda left behind, a legacy that still continues to shape and teach their daughter the things that Melinda would have, had she still been with them. That's what saddens him too, that Amelia never got to learn everything from her mother

firsthand.

She's sitting on his desk and looking at him expectantly. Her mother used to sit on his desk just like that, it was like only she reserved the special rights to sit on his desk. It had been a habit of hers, chairs were too mainstream.

"You're absolutely sure?" He has to check again. His daughter is aware of how her mother was killed in action, what he doesn't understand is why she would want to go into the field after knowing that.

She nods again barely refraining from rolling her eyes in exasperation. She may be his daughter, but she has about the same level of patience as her mother when it comes to waiting for answers.

"Dad I'm almost nineteen," she states building her case. "You can't keep me sheltered for the entirety of my life."

He sighs in defeat, she's right and she knows it. He can't treat her like a little girl forever.

"If it's what you truly want," he finally manages to say, a flicker of sadness passing over his features.

She rises from her spot on his desk and comes over to hug him.

"I know it's not what you want," she says looking up at him. She's short, about the same height as her mother really.

"But this is really what I want to do," she affirms, "it's what I was born to do."

He looks down at his little girl in his arms. She'll always be his little girl, no matter what, but how the hell did she grow up so fast? It feels like only yesterday the young woman hugging him had only been but a mere babe in his arms, all pink faced with a tuft of dark hair upon her head. Their daughter has grown into a beautiful young woman, so much like her mother, almost everything she does screams Melinda. It's uncanny, how having never really known her mother, his daughter can still be so much like her. Right down to her severe dislike of coffee. She really is Melinda's daughter he thinks, she would have been so proud.

"Alright everybody, prepped for mission!" Daisy calls as they all gather at the ramp of the plane. It is Amelia's first mission. She shrugs on her leather jacket as she approaches, her father had given it to her on her sixteenth. It had been her mother's and it was a perfect fit.

"Also how would you like to be referred to?" Daisy asks turning to her as they prepare for the mission. It needed to be clarified what Amelia would be referred to as in the field, as sharing her father's surname did complicate things when the all went by their surnames.

"Agent May," she replies seeing the proud smile and nod that her father gives her upon hearing her answer.

Just like her mother.

She is after all, her mother's daughter.

* * *

><p>AN**

So I just had the sudden urge to write some serious Philinda angst, I have no idea what came over me. Please leave a comment a let me know what you think. Comments are almost as good as Philinda hugs, and as those are very few and far between, please leave a comment and make my day :)

End
file.